ORPHANED C&GS

COMPUTERS & GAME SYSTEMS

Issue Number 2, August 1994



Classic Systems still turn on!

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Game Reviews
Other Great Stuff!

Meaningless Meanderings

All The Stuff
You Just Gotta Know!

Orphaned Computers & Game Systems,
Issue Number 2 August 1994

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Anyone interested in contributing game reviews, articles, or anything else orphaned related, get in touch.

WISH LIST

Ideas for the wish list will be listed in every issue, hoping that a reader can help find what is being searched for. Not every item submitted will be put on the wish list (although some may be repeated.),but as many as possible will be. The item wanted doesn't even have to exist. For examples just read the following.

I wish that...

.. I knew how to hook up a hard drive to the 8-bit.

... there was a good graphic oporating environment for the 8-Bit.

... I could hook up a 3½" drive to my computer.

... someone would realize that they could put 8-bit PD programs on an IBM CD Rom. Then either use an IBM with a null modem cable to transfer the files from one computer to another, or even better hook a CD Rom drive to the 8-bit.

Without cooperation from readers, this can not exist. So if you can help, Send along your information.

READERS COME THROUGH!

To tell the truth I was surprised that I recieved anyanswers to last issue's Wish List, but I did! I got the answers through e-mail. Thank you for helping out, it is this exchange of information that is so important.Here are the results;

If you would like to hook a hard drive up for your Colecovision Adam, contact Adam's House. They also carry disk drives, although very few of them. Adam's House, Route 2 box 2756, 1829 Country Road # 130, Pearland, Texas 77581-9505. Phone: (713) 482-5040.

If interested in a hard drive for your Atari 8-bit, contact: Computer Software Services, P.O. Box 17660, Rochester, New York 14617. Phone: (716) 429-5639. BBS: (716) 247-7157

How about a hard drive for you Commodore 8-bit, including you 64, or 128? Contact: Creative Micro Designs, Inc., P.O. Box 646, East Longmeadow, MA 01028-0646

It is possible to use audio cassettes with the Adam. This is what I did. drill holes in the top of the cassette where the Adam data pack has holes. Take a blank data pack and record it onto the blank cassette using a sterio. I used a 60 minute audio cassette. I sacrificed some the first few trys, but it will work!

And The Winner Is...
No one!

Last issue I had a small contest, very simple, anyone could have won. I asked a simple question and expected at least one person to answer. No one did! The question was;

What was the first game that was released for the Atari 5200 by a company other then Atari?

Also, I asked to send the reasons that you still used classic systems. There were to be two winners, but now there will be just one. The first person to do the above will recieve two new Atari 5200 games. (Star Raiders and Qix)

I would like to have a contest each issue, but if there are no contestents there can be no winners!

Also, if you have a good idea for a contest, send it in. Even if it is just what you would like the prize to be in the next contest. I would really like to hear from you!

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I didn't expect this!

Nope, no way did I think this joystick was going to be this big. Godzillia wouldn't have trouble playing a game with this joystick. He would just fit his huge claws around the joystick, set the switch for right handed play (Everyone knows he is right handed!) Sure, with this joystick Godzillia would be scoring really high on the one true version of Galaga. (The version which I speak of is the 7800 conversion of course!)

Actually folks, this is a great joystick. Well it is for some games anyway. I must warn you though that it does take a while to get used to it. The box states that it is a heavy joystick, and believe me it is! But guess what? It still isn't heavy enough! I'm not joking. The joystick itself is very stiff, very stiff indeed. (You can adjust it from underneath, but I'm used to it now.)

Here are some suggestions for your gameplay. First, I don't care what the instructions say, you can not use this joystick on your lap. It is too difficult. However, if you set the joystick on the table and stand up and play a game, it gives the feel of a real arcade game. It really does. I found some games too difficult to play wth this joystick, but shoot'em up games are perfect for this.

You may try to clamp this joystick to your table too. You may be thinking that these are true extremes to go for the use of a joystick, but this thing does give a real arcade feel to gameplay.

This joystick is unique in at least one way. It lets you select left or right handed play. This gives the joystick a universal appeal. Also you are able to chose autofire, not anything new to me. What is new is that you can adjust how fast it sets the autofire rate to. This works well with some games and not at all with others. Some games are not compatible with the autofire feature for some reason I can't explain.

I have to say that this joystick doesn't give precise control on some games. I had some trouble using it on the 2600 game Surround. (A personal favorite!) However, I could just imagine setting two of these controllers side by side and playing Robotron on the Atari 7800! Woo...

This joystick is available for $29.95 from VIDEO 61, 22735 CONGO ST. NE, STACY, MN 55079. Phone (612) 462-2500. PLEASE NOTE: There is a very limited number of these available, so order your before they are all gone!



NEWS & EVENTS:

-The Central Atari Information Network is holding the C.A.I.N. Atari Fun Fest '94. It will be held August 7, 1994/ 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM at Knights of Columbus Hall, 7637 Chardon Road, Kirtland, OH 44094. Admission is free. There will be many dealers and demonstrations of products including the Jaguar, Lynx, Falcon, Gemulator (An Atari ST emulator for the IBM), 8-bit products, 16/32 but computers, and portfolio palmtop computer. Meet the editors of C.A.I.N., the online newsletter. For more information contact Fred Horvat, P.O. Box 493, Chesterland, OH 44026-0493. Phone: (216) 729-0761, Internet: ap748@cleveland.freenet.edu

-If you own an Amiga computer, like I do, you may be interested to find out that a company has made a hardware interface that emulates a Mac. So, why am I including this in this newsletter? Well, the price is $600. (Note, I didn't say, "only $600", ask Jeremy Statz what the heck I'm talking about!) Anyway, if you happen to have this sucker, they are planning to have software upgrades so that you can simulate Atari 400/800, C64, and Apple II, among others. I wouldn't buy this just to emulate these computers... but for more info, Utilities Unlimited International, Inc., 790 N. Lake Havasu Avenue #16, Lake Havasu, AZ 86403.

-If you have anything to add to News and Events, drop me a line and I'll include it. This includes hardware, software, 'zines, or whatever!

Colecovision Adam

Many people are familiar with the Colecovision game system that knocked the Atari 2600 on its rear and never let the 5200 even stand up. Also many of these people have also heard that Coleco released a computer called the Adam. It was a popular machine for a short time becuase of the price tag and its compatibility with Colecovision games.

The Adam was released in two versions. One was the complete Adam system that came with a letter quality printer, (Very slow print speed!) keyboard, cassette deck, two joysticks, a game, SmartBASIC and manuals. The cost was an amazingly low $600. The computer was also released as expansion module #3 for the Colecovision game system. It came with all the same pieces except the tape drive plugs into the game system. The cost was even lower. Just $400!

The most exciting part of the Adam system is the cassette drive. It is extremely fast. I may be imagining this but it seems to be as fats as the Commodore 64 disk drive! It saves and loads programs from modified audio cassettes at 19.2 baud, which is faster then any other tape drive, ever! (Except for maybe tape backup on IBM's which can back up a hard drive quite quickly, although I have no experience with them myself.)

The Adam runs remarkably fast for the Z-80 chip it uses. The unit claims to have 80K RAM. However they must count the ROM because it really only has 64K of RAM. The screen holds 36 columns by 24 lines, quite a large typeface. The maximum screen resolution is 256x192.

There is a built in word proccessor called Smart Writer. It is a good program which takes advantage of special function keys on the Adam keyboard. The 32 column dislpay makes it easier to read but even more difficult to use then a 40 column screen on an Atari 8-bit or Commodore 64.

The game that comes with the Adam is called "Buck Rogers-Planet of Zoom". It is a cassette based game, but since the Adam's tape drive works so well it really doesn't effect the game much. I played this game when the Adam was first introduced and wasn't very impressed then. Sure, the shadow was neat and the graphics were pretty darn good but the game got boring too quickly. I preferred to play my friends Dragon's lair cassette. (Which he played for about two days nonstop when he first got it. He must have beat that game in record time!)

The manuals that come with the computer are adaquite but no more then that. The BASIC manual especially lacks content. It is layed out quite poorly I think. The target audence were begeinner computer users. It may be a beginners BASIC manual but it doesn't have a beginners feel. It takes itself too serouisly. Now I'm not saying the BASIC manual is actually bad, but someone with no prior experince needs more examples then the ones that are given.

IT AIN'T DEAD YET!

Like most of the classic systems, the Adam has a small group of people who are devoted to it.

Fred Horvat runs the Adam bullition board on GEnie. It can be found under the TI Round Table, which is apge 575. Fred also keeps a Public Domain library of Adam software. There are quite a number of commercial games that have been released into the public domain. He has them and they can be purchased on cassette of disk. If you would like to contact Fred, write him at FMH, P.O. BOX 493, CHESTERLAND, OH 44026. To place an order call, 216-729-0761. He also carries used games on cartridge for the Adam and quite a few other game systems.

NIAD is an Adam multifunction user group. I have no experince with them myself but I understand that they are quite a good user group. They publish a bi-monthly Adam newsletter, have a public domain library, and offer a discount buying service for software and hardware. You can reach them at NIAD, 9389 BAY COLONY #3, DES PLAINES, IL 60016. Give them a call at 708-296-0675.

There will be an Adam computer convention October 6-9 in Sarasota, Florida. It is call ADAM CON 6. It will have some interesting things to see including an Adam hooked up to a MIDI-Mite, an 80 column terminal, a system with two 40meg hard drives and other really interesting stuff. For more information contact, ADAMCON 06 HEADQUARTERS, 361 EDEN DR. ENGLEWOOD, FL. 34223. Phone- 813-475-4219.

There is also an ADAM News Network. They have a newsletter that is available on cassette, 160K or 720K disks. I think it is monthly, but don't quote me. I am not sure if it is available in any other format. It has articles on CP/M, has the best of articles from many different Adam newsletters from the US, Canada and the UK. The cost is a $25 donation payable to Robert Buir at 6552N 400E, KENDALLVILLE, IN 46755.

There are many features about the Adam system that I find quite good. The feel of the Adam keyboard is great, I like it better then any other keyboard I have ever used. The cassette storage is so fast that unless you need more storage it will suit your needs just fine. (Try using a cassette as the only form of storage on another computer, you would go insane!) I would like to have more on the Adam in future issues. If you would be interested in writing some kind of article, get in touch.

A STEP AHEAD, YET STILL BEHIND

Sometimes it is referred to as The Bally Astrocade, Bally Professional Arcade, Bally Arcade Videogame & computer system. It doesn't really matter too much what you call it, because no matter how you slice it, this baby is one heck of a machine!

The Bally Astrocade was first advertised by a Chicago mail order house in September/ October of 1977. It was promised that it would be expandable in six weeks, so that it would become a complete computer system. The unit contains three microprocessors, a Z-80 CPU, which runs at 1.8 MHz, a video processor, and an I/O handlier. It also has three seperate sound synthesizers.

In order to keep the unit down to the very inexpensive $300, the memory chips were seconds and were prone to overheating. In fact there is a large warning on the copy of my owners manual that states, "Do not block vents by operating this unit on a carpeted surface. Heat build up may result in component failure." From what I understand that is an understatement. Many of these units were sent back to the manufacturer because the memory chips failed. I have used four different Bally units and they get quite warm if used for even an hour or so.

Bally made many promises, about upgrades to the system which never arrived. There were several typewriter style keyboards released by third party companies in the next few years, but most required RAM upgrades. A typewriter style keyboard called ZGRASS 1200 was released in limited quanities in 1983 by Astrovision. (Who bought the Bally unit in 1980) One promise did come through, in October 1978 Bally released Tiny BASIC, a 4K cartridge based programming language.

Tiny BASIC is quite a good BASIC language with one drawback, it could only access 1.8K of memory. Even if extra memory was added (Which third party companies did release later) Tiny BASIC had no way to access it. Also, the original release of Tiny BASIC, which is now referred to as Bally BASIC, needed an additional tape adaptor that plugged into joystick port #3. With the adaptor a program could be saved to any tape recorder at the speed of 300 baud. The method which is used to save programs is sort of akward and there is the chance of error.

In November of 1978 the first issue of the newsletter Arcadian was released. I have a complete collection of this montly newsletter until October 1984, If you are interested in programming the Bally at all this newsletter is an essential along with another newsltter called > Cursor.

Astro Tiny BASIC was released in 1981 so that the Bally could be shipped as a complete unit for three hundred dollars. The diference between Bally BASIC and AstroBASIC are small but quite signifigent. Astro was able to save to cassette at 2000 baud and has a much better line editor then the original Bally BASIC. The language remained pretty much the same though. In order to load any previous program that were saved in 300 baud you needed to use a special program that had could be typed in from the new BASIC manual.

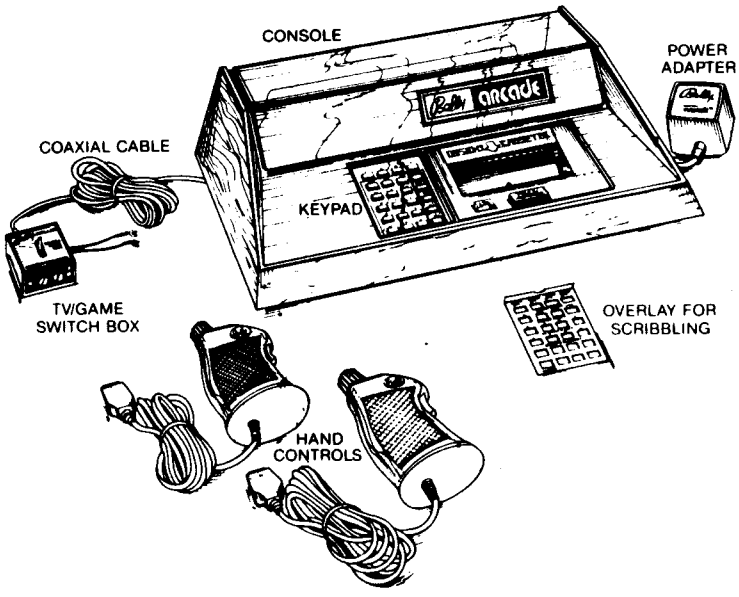
The Bally never really sold too well for several reasons including poor planning and lack of available computer chips, Also, while Bally owned and marketed the unit it was always put aside for more important projects. It wasn't even until Astrovision bought the unit in 1980 that it finally began to get the attention it deserved, although I must say quite late.

WHERE ARE THE GAMES?

The Bally contains two built in games, a calculator and a drawing program on an 8K ROM. The first game is called Gunfight, similair but superior to Atari's Outlaw. The second game is Checkmate, It is just like Atari's Surround with better graphics and 4 players can play at once. The drawing program, called Scribbling, is quite limited and you are not able to save a drawing to cassette. The calculator performs just like a handheld unit.

Bally never realeased too many cartridge games for the system. It amazes me though how many games were released on cassette by third party companies. Some of these games were quite good. Most notably the companies that released some of the better games were, L'M, Bit Fiddlers, New Image, and Esterica. It should be noted that after these companies did well with cassettes they went on to produce cartidges for the Bally as well.

The Bally Astrocade shall be a continuing column that will appear as frequently as possible. At the moment it is my favorite machine, except for the Atari 8-bit computers. In the future I plan to review some of the harder to find cartidges like Cosmic Raiders, Blast Droids, Ms. Candyman, and many others. I will also be typing in several of the game programs from different newsletters and will review the best of these Public Domain games in a seperate column.



Programming The Classics

There has been a lot of talk lately about writing games for the classic game systems. These systems are difficult to write programs on because they must be written in assembly language or machine language. There is no easy means of obtaining the above mentioned programs. But, it would be really great to have a public domain library stocked with games for systems which commercial manufacturers no longer support.

There must be a better way. There is.

The classic computer systems would be a great place to start. There are many alternative languages that are easier to learn and give terrific results. Most classic computers are equipped with a built in BASIC. This has advantages because you can start programming immediately. However, BASIC is not designed for speed, and thus does not make a good game language. You could use other languages like, C, or Pascal, which are popular. Of course there is always Assembly and machine language as well. One last advantage that BASIC does have is that it can be compiled so that it can run up to 15 times faster depending on the program to be compiled and the compiler itself. This means that a BASIC program could run almost as quickly as something written in assembly.

Not everyone is interested in writing games for the classic systems, most people just like to play them. (There are few people who still enjoy to play the classics.) There are others, myself included, who have limited experience programming who would like to try to write a game but don't have the time to begin. Then there are those few who could write a game if they are given enough time. There are few of the last type I think. It takes a great amount of time to write games, and I find it hard to believe that one person, or even two people will have the pateince to write a commercial quality game.

Since it is a hobby, the programmer would be lucky to break even. The people who programmed the great games for the classic systems did not do so overnight. Soloris, for the Atari 2600, for example took two years of work to program, and remember that programming Solaris was not a hobby, but a full time job! When the game was completed there wasn't even a large number of buyers, they had all moved on to other more advanced systems.

Classic computer systems are available for very inexpensive prices. I saw an Atari 800 with a disk drive and all power supplys for $6.99 the other day at a thrift store. Even stripped with just the very basics, this sytem has 16K RAM, far more than that available on the classic game systems. That is all the hardware a programmer needs to begin. Software, including programming languages, are available in the public domain for the price of a disk and copying costs, usually two or three dollars! There are hundreds of programming examples to find in the public domain. Most of the programs can be modified too, and this makes learning easier.

Of course if you find you would still rather program a classic game system, a computer makes the job much easier. It gives the advantage of a full typewriter style keyboard instead of the keypads with only a few buttons available. Those keypads can be so tedious, you will welcome the change! You could also use the computer as a word processor, database, or whatever else you need a computer for. Remember that a classic system can do almost anything a new computer does, it just takes more time. Since mos

Since most people would prefer to program games, the 40 column screen display will not cause problems. Some people will be surprised at how much programmers managed to get out of those classic systems.

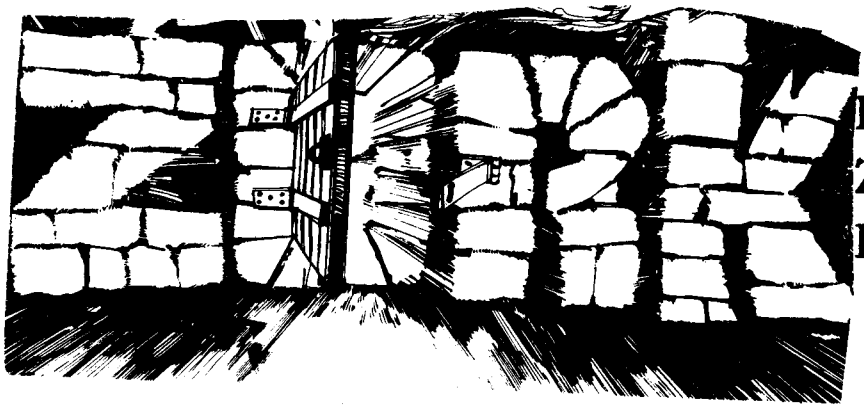
The Atari 8-bit computers were only capable of displaying 5 Players on the screen at a time. A Player is often also called a sprite, but they are different in a few ways. A player stretches from above the top view of the screen to below the bottom view of the screen. In order to make a character, most of the Player is left empty and the background can be seen through it. There is more to it then that, but that gives a rough idea.

The Commodore's, and most other 8-bits, used sprites. (In fact that is still the current term.) A sprite is very similar to a Player, but is superior in many ways. Most computers could display more then just four on the screen at one time. The C64 for example, could display eight. Unlike the Atari, they could have colors that were indepedent of the background colors. (Actually, there are games I have seen where the Players are different from the background colors. Don't ask me how they did it. Programmers have learned many tricks since 1979!)

I would like to have more information in future issues on programming, but I am not too proficient on the subject. If you have experience with any system, please write me. I would be interested in including small demo programs to type in. (Yes, small, nothing too long.) I have been tossing the idea around in my head of making PD disks for some computers each month, anyone interested?

What follows are a few sources from which you would be

(Continued On Page 10)



How to CHEAT and WIN at Zork I: The Great Underground Empire

By Paul Baca

A note from the editor: Years ago I spent hours at a time exploring Zork's dungeon and getting lost in the maze (I didn't even know that the maze could be mapped!) I wish that I had what follows back then. Paul created these maps and hints himself, with plenty of work. If anything seems amiss , please let us know! Paul solved the IBM version of Zork I, but all versions are the same as far as I know. In the next issue I will have maps and hints for Zork II. (Paul has solved all three in the series!)

1. Go to the clearing with the large tree. Climb the tree and get the jeweled egg.

2. Behind the house, open window and enter.

3. Move the rug. Get the lamp and sword, Open the trophy case. Open the trap door.

4. Down the cellar, kill the troll. Leave his axe. Drop everything but the lamp and head into the Gallery.

5. Get the painting and exit the Studio up through the chimmney into the kitchen. Go up into the Attic and get the rope. Put all treasures, except egg, in the trophy case.

6. With the rope and lamp, go to the Dome room. Tie the rope to the railing in the Dome room and climb down. Get the torch. (You can turn off the lamp now and conserve energy.) Leave bell book and candle for now.

7. In the Egyption room, get the coffin. Go to the alter, pray. In Clearing, or Behind House, open the coffin. Get the sceptre and head for the rainbow.

8. At the End Of The Rainbow wave the sceptre. Go get that gold. Go back to the house and put all the loot in the trophey case.

9. At the Maintenance room, get the wrench, the screwdriver, and the tube. Push the yellow button. Head back out to the Dam. Turn the bolt with the wrench to open the gates, Drop the wrench.

10. At the Dam Base, inflate the boat with the pump. Get in the boat (With nothing sharp- i.e. the sword or trident.) and launch. Wait awhile until you see the buoy, then grab it. Land immediately. Get out of the boat and open the buoy. Take the emerald.

11. In the Sandy Cave, dig in the sand with the shovel until you find the scarab. (Dig no further, else the walls will cave in on you.) Drop the shovel. Go over the rainbow and back to the house. (Put all your goodies into the case.)

12. In the Echo Room, type echo. Get the bar. Go put this heavy sucker in the case.

13. With the bell, book, and candle go to the entrance of Hades. Light the candle and then drop. Ring bell. Hold candle (relight if necessary). Read book. Get the skull. You can leave the book, bell candle and matches.

14. Now go collect all those those treasures you have gotten: trunk of jewels, trident, etc.

15. With the lamp, torch, garlic and screwdriver go the to the Sqeaky room. Drop Garlic. Leave figurine until you get back. Go to the Shaft Room. Put the screwdriver and torch into basket. Light lamp. Get the coal from the dead End. Put it in the basket. Lower the basket. Head down to the Timber room armed only with your lamp. Drop it and go through the tight squeeze to the Drafty room. Get all the stuff from the basket and head into the machine room. Open the machine, put in the coal and close it. Turn switch with screwdriver. Get the diamond. Put everything in basket except screwdriver. On your way out pick up the figurine, the bracelet and the basket. Slide down to the cellar and put all this in the case.

16. With the lamp, sword, lunch and bottle and as many trueasures as you can carry, head into the maze room. Go get the key and the coins. Unlock the grate. Go the the Cyclops room. and give the lunch to the Cyclops. Now give him the water. Confront the thief in his room. Now give him treasures to slow him down then kill him with your sword. (Always save your game before attempting this!)

17. After you have put all the treasures into the trophy case, take the canary (the one in the egg) and go back to the large tree. Wind up the canary and get the brass bobble. Get all the treasures into the trophy case and a parchment will appear with a map to Zork II.

Classic VideoGames

Games, Hardware, Accessories & Whatnot

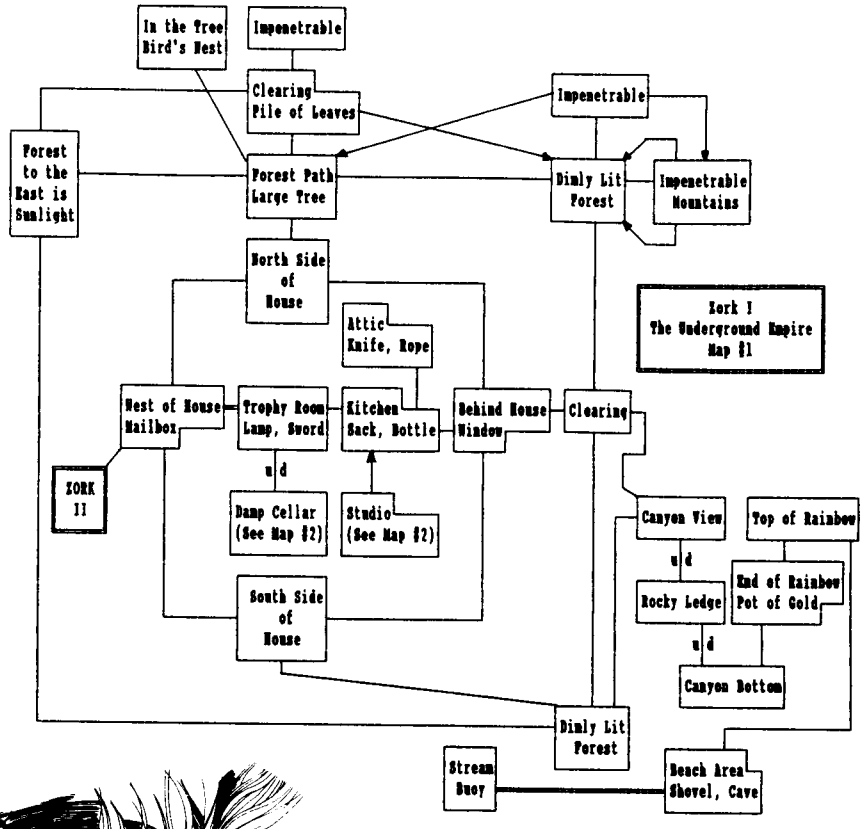
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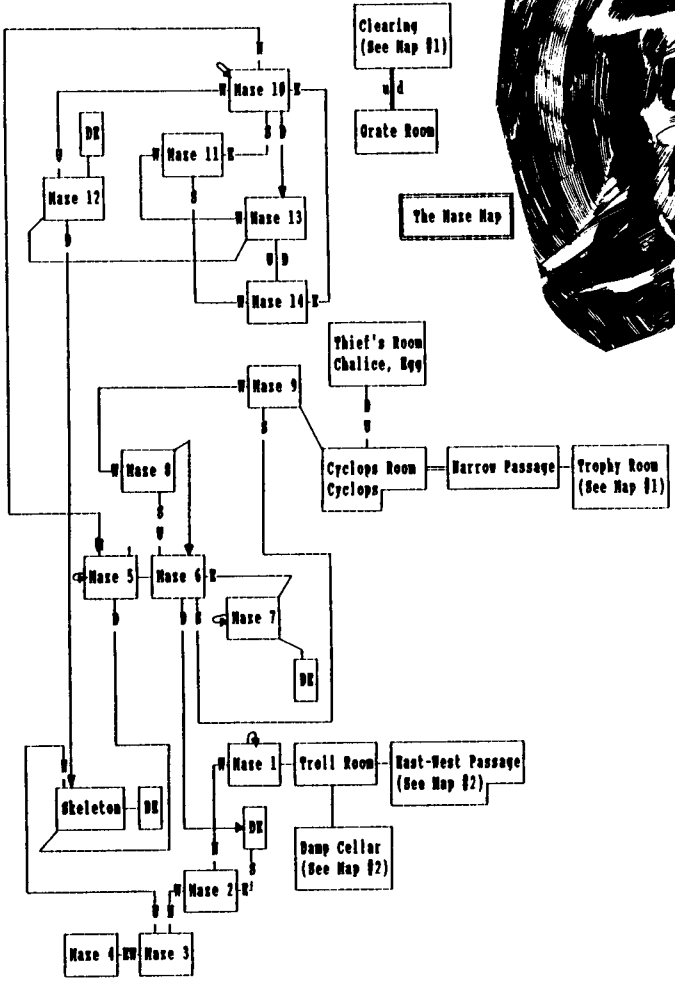
We Also buy and trade collectable classic games and hardware

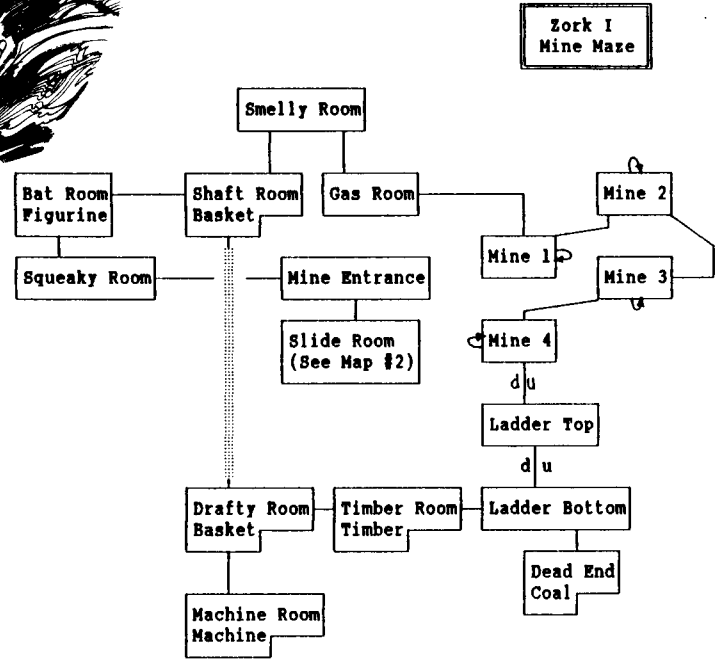
The Treasures of Zork I

Treasure	Where
Jeweled Egg	In Tree
Beautiful Painting	Gallery
Ivory Torch	Torch Room
Gold Coffin	Egyption Room
Sceptre	In Coffin
Pot of Gold	End of Rainbow
Emerald	In Buoy
Scarab	Buried in Sandy cave
Platinum Bar	Echo Room
Crystal Skull	Hades
Trunk of Jewels	Reservoir
Crystal Trident	Atlantis Room
Jade Figurine	Bat Room
Sapphire Bracelet	Gas Room
Huge Diamond	Make Your Own!
Bag of Coins	In The Maze
Siver Chalace	Thief's Room
Clockwork Canary	In The Egg
Brass Bobble	The Songbird has it



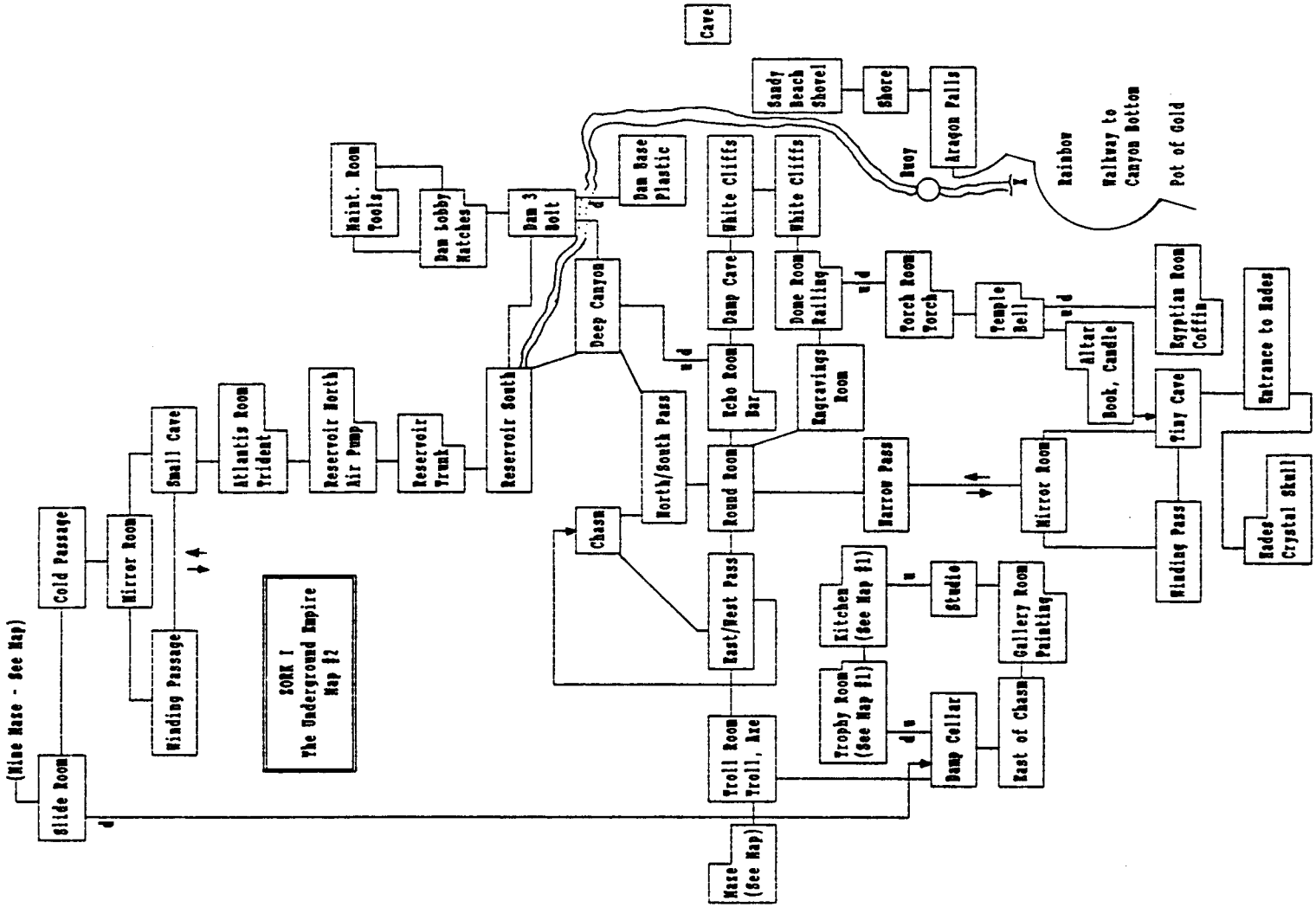






Your greatest challenge lies ahead-and downwards.





The Collectors

Henry, being a collector himself, knew the risks Helen was taking in meeting him at this coffee shop. She was legendary in the community as having the largest collection of cartridges for the 2600 game system, nearly two hundred fifty. Henry found the 2600 items too difficult to find and he preferred the old Jaguar system, although anything from the now legendary Atari company was alright with him, if he could afford and find it without risking his life too often.

What kind of gamble was he getting himself into this time? Was he going to live to see the cartridges he had heard about?

There had been talk about Helen for years. He had summed it all up into one sentence in the past. A cunning, beautiful, bitch who was as eager to slit your throat as to bring you to bed. She didn't care who she pushed aside to collect her treasures. Her collection made her one of the richest woman in the world, although she claimed she would never part with any of her rarities.

Rarities. That was what this meeting was all about wasn't it? How many street people had heard the stories of a cache of cartridges being dumped in New Mexico in the late twentieth century? Most everyone thought it was just an old story. But there were still people who spent a great part of there lives searching the New Mexico badlands in hopes of finding that fabled abandoned treasure trove of cartridges. In fact there were always rumors that someone had found something, but it always turned out to be nothing. Henry never beleived those stories... until two weeks ago.

He recieved a package that included a new, sealed in the box, mint condition 2600 cartridge. It was one which he had never heard of before, "Pele's Championship Soccer". The cartridge was worth several months pay for an any average worker. There seemed to be no way to reach the person who had sent the item to him. Who could send such a gift? Or had it been a mistake?

It turned out to be Helen. She was one of the few people who could afford such a gift. What really amazed Henry was that Helen must have had another copy of the game. When she notified him, she hinted that she had a great many cartridges he might be interested in. What was she after letting him in on the deal? It couldn't be money, she had enough of that already. Well, as soon as she arrived he would find out, he was certain of that.

The coffee shop was pretty deserted for this time of day. Hanry wondered if Helen had arranged it that way, afterall, she had all the influence to do it. There were just a few people eating lunch. Helen said to be promt at one o'clock. He arrived a half hour early just in case. His watch said he had about five minutes to wait.

It was ten after one when Henry looked up from his iced tea to see a tall man walk through the door. He looked like a pretty rough guy. Henry continued to watch him as the man approached his table.

"You Henry?"

"Who wants to know."

The stranger glared at Henry. He didn't look pleased.

"I'll ask the questions."

Henry decided he had better answer right quick.

"Yea, I'm Henry."

"Well then, come with me. Someone wants to see you."

Without another word the man walked toward the front door. Henry followed close behind, he was glad he had paid his bill already.

Outside the man asked him to step inside a car.

"You are about to meet someone very special, think your ready?"

Henry was ready for anything.

I plan to have this story continue for a while. If you think I'm wasting space, tell me. It is an experiment. I want to keep my newsletter interesting and fresh. I haven't seen anything like this in a newsletter or magazine, but who cares! I hope you like it!

Programming The Classics
(Continued From Page 6)

able to get additional information on programming;

Compute! books- These are excellent resources. They produced books for the Commodore 64, Vic-20, Plus-4, Atari 8-bits, TI, and a few others. However they are no longer in print, and Compute! is no longer with us. Do not confuse Compute! with Compute. Compute is published by the same company that produces Omni and Penthouse, among other things. If you look around, you should have no problem finding places that carry these books. (The computer books that is.)

Harry Dodgeson has created a monitor cartridge for the 2600/7800. It requires a 7800 Prosystem to run. A monitor is a program which lets you write machine language and assembly language programs. I have read good things about this fairly new item. The new version even lets you write the program on an IBM then load it through an interface inthe cartridge. For more information write to, Harry Dodgeson, P.O. Box 19547, Kalamazoo, MI 49019-0574.

There are far too many systems to program for me to include information about all of them. If you would like more information, please contact me, as I would like to get anyone interested as much information for the specific system of their choice as possible.

Classic Games Reviewed!

The best of the best & sometimes, the worst of the worst

Sinistar/ By Williams
Arcade Game: 1982
Reviewed by Dave Wesner

If you're reading this mag at all, you've probably got a healthy sense of video game nostalgia. I do, and if you're like me, much of this nostalgia centers not only around games you used to play at home, but on those old arcade games as well.

Maybe it's just the impending of old age (I'm 26), but it seems that there is something special about those older arcade games. Most had no music, or maybe 6 or 7 notes repeated endlessly. (Remember Xevious?) You didn't beat games then, either. If you had the skill and the will you could literally play all day on one quarter.

Graphics were limited too, so the programmers had to compensate with a big dose of creativity. Now games can be made to resemble whatever the programmers want them to. As a result they seem to lack somewhat in really innovative ideas. Also, doesn't it seem like all the good ideas have been taken?

Sinistar

As I write this, there is an old Sinistar machine (Williams, c. 1982) looking over my shoulder. This game is a great example of the "classic arcade" genre. Most people who try it will fail miserably, because it's not immediately obvious what you have to do.

You pilot a small triangular ship, kind of a raster-graphics update of the ship in Asteroids. You fly through asteroid fields, which scroll in any direction you choose. You must shoot the asteroids, which release "crystals". Each crystal, basically a flashing pixel, gives you one "Sinibomb".

While you are collecting the crystals there are little red, bug-like creatures (workers) that swarm around you trying to pick up stray crystals. The workers mission in life is to build the Sinistar out of the crystals. The Sinistar is a giant spiky white face that, when completed, chases you relentlessly, shouting harangues like, "Run, coward!" and "I hunger!".

To make matters worse, while the workers are building Sinistar, round tank-like "warriors" take potshots at you with varying degrees of accuracy.

The purpose of the game is to destroy Sinistars. To do this, you launch Sinibombs at the Sinistar. It takes at least 13 Sinibombs to smash a Sinistar, so you must mine the asteroids diligently while 'ol Sinnie's getting built. Otherwise you'll end up spinning into that grinning mouth amid derisive laughter. Once the Sinistar consumes you, he gives you the helpful reminder, "I am Sinistar."

Typical of games made by Williams in their heyday, this is not an easy play. There are no patterns guaranteed to work, so concentration and reflexes are your only hope. After each Sinistar is destroyed you progress to a new "zone". Each zone is named for, and has a greater proportion of, either warriors, workers, or asteroids. There is also a "void" zone, with few of any of these. The game doesn't end, you just keep shuttling from zone to zone until your ships, time, or patience run out.

Sinistar wasn't one of Williams big hits, but it stands up today at least as well as Robotron, Joust, or Defender. The machine behind me is set to give ten ships for a quarter, so I've been indulging my high school nostalgia quite a bit lately. It brings it all back– sitting in class waiting for that final bell so I could bolt to the Cosmos game room or maybe the Cave Inn, hurried by that voice in my head screaming, "Run, coward!"

Jumpman Jr./By Epyx
Home Computer Game:1983
Reviewed By Adam Trionfo

I first played Jumpman Jr. on the Colecovision about 1984. My friend could play that game, without losing a man, for hours. I remember once when he had recieved over one hundred fifty men, no kidding! I, on the other hand, am nowhere near as adept as that. In fact I am unable to pass the third level on the Atari version.

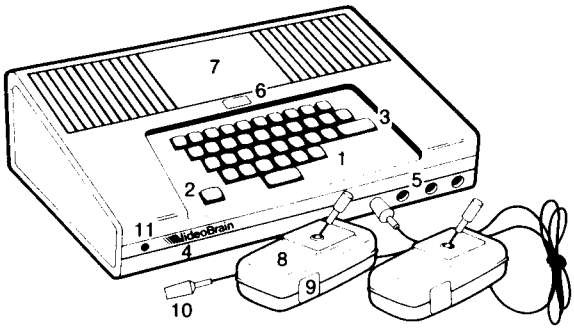
I don't remember the Coleco translation well enough to say how good it was, I think it was about the same. The advantage that the Atari has is that you can use an Atari joystick, rather then the Coleco controller. I find the Coleco controllers difficult to use sometimes, espececially when trying to make precise movements.

Jumpman Jr. is a simple platform game with ten levels. You control a guy wearing rocket boots which give you the ability to jump from platform to platform. The object is to collect all the clover shaped objects, which are bombs, without losing all your men. (Not quite original, but at least you don't have to save the world!) There is no time limit, but there are many obsticles that would be glad to help you get rid of your lives. There are bullets, which travel slowly, then speed up when they spot you. There are pits which you can fall into, especially on the higher levels where the screen is black and you can not see where you are going. There may be missles too, as there are some in Jumpman, but I am not sure if this game contains any.

There are also obstacles that make the game more complicated but are not really out to get you. There are two types of ropes, one which your jumpman climbs

(Continued On Page 14)

The VideoBrain



Okay, I have to admit I know little about this computer, but I will share what I know with you.

I own twelve cartidges for this system and they are each almost the size of a beta video cassette. I do not have the computer system itself though, and thus I cannot judge how these games are. From the documentation, I presume they are very inferior to what was available at the time.

The documentation for some reason leads me to believe this computer had very primitive graphics ability. The computer documentation itself is really quite sad. It even mentions that if you don't turn the computer off you will not lose your information in RAM. It makes a big deal of this fact. It actually even suggests you

From the docs I have read there doesn't seem to be anyway to store programs, not even on cassette. However they did release a programming language, called APL/S, so there must be a way to save something.

There may have been a modem released for this computer as well because they released a communications program called "Timeshare".

I own two joysticks. They are heavy and it seems are built to last a nuclear war. If you have ever used a cheap TRS80 joystick, which isn't self centering, then you know what these joysticks are all about!

Sure, it seems I'm down on this system, but from the docs I just didn't get a good impression. If anyone knows about this system, or owns one, please get in touch.

Telecommunications in

The Gaming Community

It seems everywhere I look I hear talk about the Internet and how much it helps people communicate. There are hundreds of users out there who do almost all their collecting online. Where does that leave the rest of us?

How many people actually have access to the Internet at all? I don't. I know many, many people who don't. I do my collecting through classified ads and thrift store shopping. Are we missing out on something fantastic?

Internet is not the be all and end all of the gaming community. There is GEnie, Compuserve and Delphi too. Many people also use these as channels for collecting. They are also great sources for PD software for the classic computer systems. (Of course, so is the Internet.)

I'm not down on the idea of the Internet, in fact I think the idea is great. I find it hard to understand though. I have no way to gain access without paying high prices. (I understand Delphi has good Internet access, but my knowledge is limited on this subject.)

Is there anyone willing to give some clues for the 'net? Perhaps some of the more popular addresses would be in order. Even a general overview of telecommunications would be helpful for many people.

'Zines/Newsletters

The VideoGame Trader: This is another go at a classified oriented newsletter. In fact, this is nothing but classifieds. It costs a buck. Volume 3, #1 is pretty basic, but worth the price. There should be a new issue by now. This has great potential! The VideoGame Trader, P.O. Box 493, Chesterland, OH 44026. Phone: (216) 729-0761

MATRIX #8- Another great issue from Jeremy. A really cool review of the SNES, quite funny. Worth the buck alone! Jeremy Statz, N6148 170 ST. Elmwood, WI 54740. Phone (715) 639-3205.

Game Force #6- Cool cover. I like the new layout too. Page 9 says, "This Page Intentionally Left Blank" I thought that was great! I hate when computer manuals say that! What is the point? Has a good assortment of reviews and stuff. I've talked with Jeff and he has a lot to give to the community! Just a dollar. (A buck sure is a popular price, don't you think?) Game Force, P.O. Box 1610, Belen, NM 87002-1610.

Monty's Kitten #1: Not much to do with gaming, but a definate must! Quite funny, and the comic cover had me rolling, yea! Surprise, just a dollar! Brook's King, 1357 Jackson Ferry Road, Greenback, TN 37742. Have you had your ham today?

Current Notes Vol. 14, No. 5: This isn't a newsletter but a full fledge magazine. It isn't game oriented either. It costs $4.95, and is now bimonthly. It covers Atari ST and 8-bits. This is THE Atari magazine. Highly recommended! Subscribe even! You might find this in a large newsstand, look for it! Current Notes Inc., 122 N. Johnson Rd, Sterling, VA 20164. Phone: (703) 450-4761.

Classic Systems & Games Monthly #3: This is a cool newsletter. Vectrex reviews, Plenty of classifieds and tons of other stuff. Costs $1.75. I like the fact that it is so varied. Jeff Adkins, 11 Windsor, Attica, NY 14011.

The Lazer #7: This issue has more space dedicated to the classic systems. Has a review of many 2600 Activision games. Also Colecovision games reviewed. $2.00. The Lazer, 2 Rock Ridge Drive, Norwalk CT., 06854 Phone: (203) 866-5946

2600 Connection #23: This issue is dedicated to collecting. As usual, very good! Tim always has interesting insights into gaming. $1.00. The 2600 Connection c/o Tim Duarte P.O. Box N664, Westport MA 02790

Video Magic #115: First off, if this is issue 115, how long has this newsletter/catalog been around? A while! Review of Mr. Robot and His Robot Factory. Game Design. Game programming on Atari. Note that most articles are continued into the next issue. You can always order the complete article for a small price, sometimes includes a disk. This also is a catalog for most systems, quite reasonable prices. Some things for bid. $2.00. Frank M. Polosky P.O. Box 9542, Pgh, PA 15223.

If you have a newsletter you would like reviewed, send it in! There are a great number of sources out there, I'm going to attempt to make a list that will be available seperately.

Free? Atari Public Domain What? Where? How? Why? Free?

Public Domain. There is loads of it out there, just waiting to be taken. I will will explain a bit about it, and review some of the better titles.

There are many different titles for software that is legally copied and freely distributable among people. The most popular format for the IBM is Shareware. This type of software costs about $5 a disk. The buyer uses the program for a short time and decides if they can use it. If they can then the honor system calls upon them to send the programmer a donation of some amount mentioned in the program. For Atari this usually is from about $5 to $20.

When the user sends the programmer money they have registered the program and usually recieve printed documentation, free or inexpensive upgrades, and support if needed. Sometimes the Shareware program will have fixes so that it will not work unless registered. The Author then sends a working copy. (This is not usually the case in the Atari community.)

Then there is public domain. This is the catagory of programs that do not cost anything except the price of the disk and a small copying cost. Most places charge two or three dollars a disk. Many places also give discounts for bulk purchases.

The public domain (PD) contains many types of programs including games, word processors, databases, utilities of every description, and other goodies.

There are drawbacks to PD software though. The quality of the softare is almost never commercial quality, which should be expected. Often PD disks come with many programs that fill the disk, rather then just one pregram leaving the rest of the disk empty. There is almost always something worthwhile on a disk.

You have probably heard of other names, but they it all comes to these two catagories. Freeware is actually shareware. In fact if it doesn't call itself public domain then it is some theme of shareware and the author requests a one time usage fee. If you don't pay for your shareware you are expected to erase it.

Atari by no means has the grip on PD software, but I haven't explored other computers as much as my beloved Atari. (I have this Atari fetish, I'm not sure why... So if I seem a bit biased, that is because I am!)

The largest source of software are the online services such as GEnie, Compuserve, etc. However for those who don't have a modem or don't want to spend the time downloading software, there are also many places that have PD and shareware lists or catalogs.

What follows is a list of some places that carry PD software. Also there are some reviews.

Lake Almanor Public Domain (LAPD), c/o Stefanee Hoffee, 333 Peninsula Drive, Lake Almonor, CA 96137 GEnie: S.Hoffee2:

LAPD carries a wide selection of disks. A catalog on disk is available for one dollar. Two dollars for one side of a disk plus two dollars for as many disks ordered. Here are two reviews of PD games that LAPD carries;

Arkanoid (Disk 112): Just about everyone has heard of this excellent breakout type game. This is not a clone, but the Atari release by Taito. It has been released into the public domain becuase it has a flaw- the computer locks up at high levels. (I have played for a really long time and have never had this happen to me...)

The game can be played with a joystick, paddle or keyboard. The game response is quick and very smooth. The graphics are great and blow Breakout back into the seventies where it just whithers to nothing. HINT: Place something heavy onto the Space Bar, it will slow the ball down sometimes. This game is highly recommended.

Bros. (Disk 466): This is a Super Mario Bros. clone. (Mario, what is that?) It has quite a few differences, and it is a typical example of a pretty good PD game. This is not commercial quality, but is very fun. The graphics are okay, but sorta blocky. (Not 2600 blocky! The 2600 worships this game!) The sound is alright, I love the noise Mario makes when he dies! The biggest drawback of this games is joystick control, it will take a while to get used to it. This game is also recommended. (I'm not going to review bad PD or shareware, that would be a waste of space.)

M.W.P.D.S., 890 N. Huntington Street, Medina, OH 44256: This company's catalog is not on disk and costs one dollar. Each disk costs $2.50, which fills both sides. There is a minimum order of five disks which is works out to $12.50, plus an additional $3.00 for shipping per order. They have a large selection of games, but here I will review some utility disks.

Utilities: (Disk 129): For anyone wishing to create a game with BASIC, this disk is an essential. There is a program to help you create Player/Missle graphics and a number of programs for the Atari 1020 plotter.

Utilities: (Disk 54): This has loads of P/M demos, a great help to get an insiders view to create BASIC games! Also contains many menu programs and a compression program to help conserve disk space.

The following two places carry PD software for other computers;

F.M.H., P.O. Box 493, Chesterland, OH 44026 Phone: 216-729-0761. Fred carries Adam software, much of which was once commercial and has been released into the public domain.

CALOKE IND., P.O. Box 18477, Raytown, MO64133. Apple and C64/128. Specify which for free catalog, or two dollars for sample disk, which is refundable.

—Classified Ads—

Classified Ads to appear in issue 3 will cost one dollar for fifty words or less with each additional word costing a nickel. Send in an ad for an item that you have always been looking for! You might just find what you need or never even new you wanted!

Send ads to *Orphaned C&GS*, c/o Adam Trionfo, 775 Garnet Drive, NE., Rio Rancho, NM 87124. Phone: 505-896-0241. GEnie: A.Trionfo.

I would like this newsletter to become a source for everyone's needs. I'll add catagories as needed. By the way, your encouraged to use these ads as a place for pen pals. Communication is the key if we want to get the most from our systems and hobby.

NOTE: Ads for counterfit games will not be published. Piracy is a crime, no matter if the company that released the software exists any longer or not!

Atari 8-Bit

Wanted: Public Domain software on disk. Commercial software, especially cartridges (Games or not). Magazines, books, modem (2400 baud or faster), 3 ½" drives, BBS software, hard drive, Just about anything that I can get my filthy, grubby hands on. The Atari is my favorite 8-bit. Send info to *Orphaned C&GS*.

Atari and other Classic Computer Software and Hardware. Atari 8: Super Sketch Tablet- $12.00. Send #10 SASE for listing to: More Than Games (OCG), 8207 Briarwood Lane, Austin, TX 78757-7642

Atari 2600

WANTED: Early magazines,Omega Race and controller. Send info to *Orphaned C&GS*.

Atari 5200

WANTED: Ideas on how to make an IBM joystick and 2600 keypad for use instead of 5200 controllers, which always break! (As if you didn't know!), I'm not really interested in games unless I can get my controllers to work! Send info to *Orphaned C&GS*.

Atari 7800

Wanted: Proline Joystick and games (Common or not). Send info to Orphaned C&GS.

Colecovision/ Adam

WANTED: Address for the ADAM user group in England. Microsoft BASIC, any PD software that is available, ideas on how to hook up a 5 ¼" or 3 ½" disk drive. Manuals, carts, magazines, card to hook up a dot matrix printer. Send info to *Orphaned C&GS*.

Clubs

The Atari Video Club is looking for new members! If you own an Atari game system (2600-Jaguar) then the Atari Video club is for you. For a free sample issue of the clubs fanzine ("The Atari Zone") mail a S.A.S. business sized envelope to: AVC/Dan Iancovelli, 1411 North 36th, Melrose Park, IL. 60160-2726 (Live near Chicago? Ask about local meetings.)

I would like to form a classic video game club here in Albuquerque, NM. If you play any of the classic systems listed in this newsletter, please contact *Orphaned C&GS*.

Commodore

WANTED: For the 64, a 1200 baud or faster modem with a Telecommunications Program. PD software on disk. Cartridges (Games or not). Send info to *Orphaned C&GS*.

Bally Astrocade

WANTED: ZGRASS keyboard by Astrovision, or any other typewriter style keyboard released. After ten years it is quite difficult to find cassettes that will still load. Is there a sourse for PD programs that could load from cassette Also would like the 16K Ram expansion called VIPER with the keyboard if available. Send info to *Orphaned C&GS*.

Intellivision

WANTED: A working Intellivision III, keypads are not neccesary. Power Supply for Intellivision II. Magazines, newsletters, or whatever from the period when this system was popular would be good too. Send info to *Orphaned C&GS*.

Odyssey 2

WANTED: An Odyssey 1 TV switchbox. Send info to OC&GS.

Put Your Odyssey 2 ad here! It's fun, and it's free! You know you want to. So don't hesitate a single second...

TI/4A

WANTED: Info on connecting a disk drive to my TI. Also I need a modem(preferably at least 1200baud). I need a telecommunications program. Also, I would like any PD software on cassette. I need an adaptor to use my Atari joysticks instead of the TI Remote Controllers. Send info to *Orphaned C&GS*.

Vectrex

Put Your Vectrex ad here! It's fun, and it's free! You know you want to. So don't hesitate a single second...

Miscellaneous

WANTED: Books, newsletters, catalogs, magazines, flyers, pamphlets, that concern early game systems, computers and electronic tinkering. I am especially intersted in *Family Computing* magazine. Send info to *Orphaned C&GS*.

WANTED!!! My girlfriend really wants a game called "Space Eggs". It was made by Sirius Software in about 1982. It was released for most of the systems at that time including, Apple, Atari, Vic-20, and IBM. I would prefer a cartridge version for an Atari 8-bit, but any format for any system will do! Contact *Orphaned C&GS*.

Classic Videogames- Atari 2600, 5200, 7800, Colecovision, Intellivision, Odyssey, apf, Vectrex, Arcadia, Bally, RCA Studio II, others. Over 1600 different items in stock. 22 page catalog, send $1(refundable with first order) to: JerryG VideoGames, 14700 NW Bonneville Loop, Beaverton, OR 97006. On Line: AOL: JerryG4279

A Book Reveiw:

Flicker
By Theodore Roszak

This book has nothing to do with computers or games. But that doesn't matter. If you don't read it there is always going to be a void in your life.

I must warn you that if you take my advice and read this book you will probably need to go to a used book store as it is out of print. It is published by Bantam Books in case that might help you find it.

The book is about a fictional film director in the 1920's through the 40's. It takes place in an alternative universe, well sorta... it's very similar to ours. This book defies description, no joking. I have seen this book in every section of used book stores! This is a sensational book, read it!

Jumpman Jr.
(Continued from Page 11)

automatically when he jumps on it. The jumpman lowers himself down the other rope when he jumps on it. There are ladders too, which connect the levels too.

Overall Jumpman Jr. is simple to play and responds quickly to the joystick movements. I find it highly addictive, and usually play for nearly an hour at a time. (An hour for me playing the same game is a long time!) down the other rope when he jumps on it. There are ladders too, which connect the levels too.